

# Town of Washington

## News and Calendar



May, 2006

For the benefit of those of you who were not able to attend the Annual Meeting of the Town of Washington, I'm going to devote this Newsletter to the remarks I made at that meeting.

### **Appreciations**

I want to express my personal appreciation for the hard work and dedication of a number of people whose efforts make the Town of Washington function.

First, I'd like to recognize and thank the staff of the Town Office: Valerie Carpenter, Town Clerk/Treasurer, Faith Overdahl, Deputy Clerk, and Marilyn Pinzur, Assistant – and our ever-reliable link to the history of how things have been done over the years. In part because I work closely with this staff, I can assure you that the Town is being very well served by these dedicated people. Thank you.

Second, I want to thank our hard-working Town Crew: Greg Jensen, Supervisor, and Lee Baxter, Steve Beekman and Jonathan Mann. This multi-talented group fixes roads, builds parking lots, repairs buildings, plows the roads, keeps our parks clean and generally does a multitude of things that keep our Island functioning smoothly and looking its best for our residents and visitors. The excellent snow removal this past winter is a recent reminder of the quality of their work. Thank you.

Third, Jeff Stayton and John Furner deserve our thanks for making our landfill/transfer station operations work smoothly. On a busy summer day they often process a hundred cars or more. Theirs is a tough job, and often a thankless one – and they deserve our thanks and recognition. Thank you.



### ***Spring is here at last on the Island!***

Fourth, I want to recognize and thank our Police Officers: Tyler McGrane and Chris Utecht. We are indeed fortunate to have these dedicated and professional officers serving the Washington Island community. Thank you.

While I'm on the subject of Public Safety, I want to take this opportunity

to recognize and thank President Lou Small and all the members of the Rescue Squad, and Chief Wayne Ostor and the Fire Department. Their dedication to volunteer service keeps us safe. Thank you.

I'd like to recognize and thank the election poll workers: Sally Clancy, Micki Johnson and Marsha Gunnlaugsson, who put in long hours on Election Day to make sure that the voting process goes smoothly. Thank you.

Walt Nehlsen, manager of the Washington Island Airport, does an excellent job of keeping the Airport running smoothly, keeping track of the planes that come and go, and getting an amazing amount of grant funds to finance improvements. Thank you, Walt.

And finally, I'd like to recognize and thank Jeannie Hutchins and her staff at the Jacobsen Museum, and Kathleen Morris, Dock Master, and her staff at the Maritime Museum, as well as Barb Ellefson and her volunteers at the Archives for their dedication and hard work. Thank you. And a special thank you to Jeannie Hutchins, who retired this year after ten years of running the Jacobsen Museum. I'm sure anyone who has visited that Island jewel in the past few years will agree that she has done an excellent job.

***Continued on reverse.***

Fortunately, she says she is only retiring as Manager, but will continue to work as a volunteer.

And last, but certainly not least, I'd like to thank the members of the Town Board – Supervisors Jim VanRamshorst, Joel Gunnlagsson, Ron Overdahl and Liz Holmes. I think few people know how hard they have worked and how dedicated they are to making Washington Island the best community it can be. It has been an honor to serve with them, and I am looking forward to another year of progress.

If I've left anyone out – my apologies.

### **Highlights of the past year – May 05 – April 06**

Approximately ten miles of the Town's roads were paved with hot mix asphalt, while more than three miles of roads were chip-sealed. The Town borrowed \$300,000 for this project from the Commissioner of Public Lands at a favorable rate and reserved \$100,000 from the previous year's surplus. I believe most people are very happy with our upgraded roads.

Realignment of one airport runway was approved - runway 4-22, at 2,250 feet. Engineering work is underway, and the project is expected to be completed in 2007. The runway's favorable orientation, which avoids the Town center, was made possible by a generous gift of ten acres of land purchased from Ted Hansen by Bruce McClaren and Mike Berger.

The Town Crew was returned to its previous strength of four employees with the hiring of Steve Beekman and Jonathan Mann.

The Town Crew completely refurbished and repaired the fish shed on Jackson Harbor Dock.

The Town Board transferred the Town's

primary banking relationship from Baylake Bank to the Public Funds Division of Citizens Bank. We have been very pleased with the competitive rates and the excellent service of the Public Funds Division of Citizens Bank.

The Town Board adopted a comprehensive new Cemetery Ordinance – Thanks to Supervisor Liz Holmes for her work on this project.

The Town purchased new grills for Schoolhouse Beach and the Town Crew built new picnic tables. A new raft was authorized and is being purchased for installation this spring.

The Town Crew created a new parking lot at Schoolhouse Beach with room for at least 40 cars. This parking lot, which is essential to safety at the beach, will be completed in time for the summer season.

A series of Forums for Progress was initiated through the efforts of Supervisor Ron Overdahl and Carol Stayton, president of the Chamber of Commerce. These forums have been a very useful opportunity for interested citizens to express opinions on a variety of topics and are intended to form a vital part of the Town's input to the Door County Comprehensive Plan.

Officer Chris Utecht was hired as the Town's second police officer to replace Officer Jim Lukaszewski, who retired.

A new police vehicle has been acquired to replace the used Crown Victoria given by the County. The Board authorized additional funds to add to the County's contribution in order to upgrade from a Crown Victoria pursuit vehicle to a four-wheel drive Ford Expedition, which is much more useful on Washington Island. The new vehicle is now in service.

A revised and restated agreement for the operation of the Island Medical Clinic was negotiated with Door County Memorial Hospital (DCMH) and was unanimously approved by the Town Board. A major change from previous years is the inclusion of Bellin Hospital, which is providing Nurse Practitioners to DCMH to cover the medical needs of the Island during the periods when the doctor is on vacation or Continuing Medical Education, as well as every other weekend and half of the six major holidays. This agreement assures the Town of medical coverage on a 24/7 basis year-round, while giving our doctor reasonable time off.

Gymnasium. With the failure of the fundraising plan for the proposed Library/Gymnasium, this project was turned back to the Town Board. I have received an initial proposal from the firm that constructed the Performing Arts Center for a gymnasium that would cost approximately \$2.0 million. If, as I believe, there is already more than \$1.5 million set aside for this project, this new proposal seems to be at least potentially doable. I will be pursuing this opportunity, as well

as expanding the Library into the current gymnasium space, during the next few months. I want to say again that any gym or library project will be accomplished without any commitment of taxpayer dollars.



**Town Chairman**